

*Oral Questions***CANADIAN ARMED FORCES****RESIGNATIONS OF GENERAL PARADIS AND OTHER HIGH RANKING OFFICERS**

**Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. He is well aware that there has been another resignation of a senior officer, Lieutenant-General Paradis, from the Canadian Armed Forces. Can the minister explain why General Paradis, whose ability, knowledge, forthrightness and dedication to the forces were well known, decided to resign some three years before his normal retirement date?

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, the retirement of General Paradis prior to his retirement date is just normal. It was the choice of General Paradis to take that step.

I know General Paradis very well. I have talked with him, and his retirement is according to his own choice and nothing else.

**Mr. McKinnon:** Madam Speaker, in the last year we have seen the early and, I submit, the arranged retirements of Lieutenant-General MacKenzie, the commander of Air Command, Major-General St. Aubin, and Admiral Martin, the commander of the Maritime Command, Pacific. The commander of Maritime Command was transferred out of his command in less than a year, and now General Paradis is resigning, having been made an offer he could not possibly accept.

Can the minister explain why he is getting rid of so many of his most capable officers?

**Mr. Lamontagne:** Madam Speaker, as the hon. member must know, because he is a former defence minister, our Armed Forces have a very elaborate and very good retirement plan. That gives many high-ranking generals the advantage of retiring ahead of time when they feel they have other work to do. I think they have a great advantage. All these retirements ahead of time have been taken as a matter of choice. No one has been forced to retire.

As far as General Paradis is concerned, I regret that he is leaving because he is a very able man.

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**MCDONALD ROYAL COMMISSION****EXTENSION OF MANDATE**

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby):** Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Solicitor General. As the minister knows, the mandate of the McDonald commission expires today, almost four years after its organization, and after the expenditure of \$10 million. Last October when the minister gave the commission its March 31 deadline he told the House, "This is the final date being established now. It is a sufficient

time for the commission to complete matters that should be completed".

Will the minister now confirm that the McDonald commission has asked for yet another extension of its mandate, and will he tell the House how much longer the people of Canada will have to continue funding this commission, which is the longest running judicial road show in Canada's history?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General):** Madam Speaker, indeed today is the last day provided in the existing order in council, but a little over a week ago the McDonald commission was in touch with the government indicating that it required a few more weeks to complete its work. An order in council is in the course of preparation today. It will extend the mandate of the McDonald commission, at its request, to Friday, May 15.

**Mr. Robinson (Burnaby):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting to note the order in council has not yet been prepared, so the commission legally dies at the end of today.

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**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE****QUERY RESPECTING LEGISLATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS**

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question relates to promised legislation with respect to the RCMP. The minister has been promising regularly since last April that he would proceed as a top priority with long overdue revisions to the RCMP Act arising from the Marin report. In May of last year he admitted that the present procedures were unfair to members of the force.

When will the minister stop playing games with members of the RCMP and bring forward this long overdue legislation and, in particular, when will he, as urged by the Association of Seventeen Divisions, grant collective bargaining rights on pay and working conditions to members of the RCMP, the only police force in Canada whose members are denied the freedom of association contained in the government's charter of rights?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General):** Madam Speaker, the RCMP do not have the right to collective bargaining, but there is a very effective system in effect for dealing with industrial relations within the force, with which I am quite familiar after a year on the job. I think that system is effective and satisfactory to the overwhelming majority of members of the force.

So far as the death today of the McDonald commission is concerned, I want to comfort the hon. member by reassuring him that an order in council went to cabinet this morning, but it has not yet been signed by His Excellency. I think that during the course of the afternoon it will be signed by or on behalf of the Governor General.

As to the third question which was enclosed in that supplementary question about the RCMP Act, I am glad to be able